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INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON
MINE CLEARANCE
Geneva, 5-7 July 1995
Item 3 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE, AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting.

2. Election of officers.

3. Adoption of the rules of procedure, agenda and organization of work.

   High-level segment

4. General statements by participants and announcements of contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance.

   Panels of experts

5. Discussion on the technical aspects of mine clearance and mine-related issues.

6. Strengthening and promotion of the stand-by capacity of the United Nations in mine clearance.

7. Conclusion of the work of the Meeting.

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Annotated agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting

In its resolution 49/215 of 23 December 1994, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to consider the convening, as early as possible, of an international meeting on mine clearance, to include a meeting of experts and a meeting of potential donors, in order to promote the work of the United Nations and international cooperation in this field.

Accordingly, the Secretary-General is convening an International Meeting on Mine Clearance at the Palais des Nations at Geneva, from 5 to 7 July 1995.

2. Election of officers

It is proposed that the Bureau of the International Meeting be composed of a President and four Vice-Presidents.

3. Adoption of the rules of procedure, agenda and organization of work

It is proposed that the proceedings of the International Meeting on Mine Clearance be governed by the Rules of Procedure for United Nations Pledging Conferences (A/33/580) on the understanding that, in accordance with rule 22 of the aforementioned rules, any procedural matter arising at the International Meeting that is not covered by these rules shall be settled in accordance with the rules applicable to committees of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The provisional agenda for the Meeting has been drawn up on the basis of the guidelines set out in General Assembly resolution 49/215 and following consultations with Governments.

A proposed programme of work for the Meeting is annexed to the present document.

High-level segment

4. General statements by participants and announcements of contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance

The Secretary-General will open the high-level segment of the Meeting.

The objective of the International Meeting is to promote the work of the United Nations and international cooperation in the field of mine clearance. In order to achieve this objective effectively, the Meeting will seek further political and financial support for United Nations mine-clearance programmes from the international community. The United Nations has established several comprehensive mine-clearance programmes, involving various departments, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system in a number of countries seriously affected by land-mines. The Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session (A/49/357 and Add.1

and 2), noted that in 1993, the United Nations sought approximately US$ 67 million for its mine-clearance assistance activities and that an additional US$ 60 to 100 million in funding would be necessary for the United Nations to increase its capacity significantly. It is, therefore, hoped that the Meeting will provide an opportunity for States to address the land-mine problem and to exchange views on how to enhance the capacity of the United Nations system in this field.

The Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance was established by the Secretary-General on 30 November 1994. The purpose of the Trust Fund is to provide special resources for mine-clearance programmes. In situations where other sources of funding are not readily available, those funds could cover initial start-up projects in order to ensure their timely implementation, including costs covering the dispatch of assessment missions to determine the scope and nature of mine problems and to devise plans for addressing such problems. Ultimately, the Fund is envisioned as filling the gaps created by standard financing delays and to fund urgently needed projects. Delegations wishing to announce their contributions to the Trust Fund are invited to do so in the context of their statements to the high-level segment of the Meeting.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on international efforts to address the global problem of uncleared land-mines (SG/CONF.7/2)

Panels of experts

5. Discussion on the technical aspects of mine clearance and mine related issues

In its resolution 49/215, the General Assembly requested that the International Meeting on Mine Clearance also include a meeting of experts. Accordingly, arrangements have been made for experts from mine-affected States, representatives of interested States and relevant organizations of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties, to share their respective experiences in dealing with the land-mine problem and methods of addressing the different aspects of this problem. It is hoped that, through this exchange of views, further measures can be developed to enable the international community to respond more effectively in this area.

Following consultations with Governments, it is proposed that nine panels be established to exchange views on the themes set out below.

To facilitate discussion of these issues, background papers (to be issued in English and French) will be made available to delegations prior to the convening of the Meeting.

(a) Mine surveys

This Panel will address questions pertaining to locating and mapping mined areas in a timely and efficient manner as well as to storing, disseminating and

utilizing these data effectively. Use of computerized mapping systems and databases for gathering and disseminating information will also be discussed.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 1

(b) Current methods in mine clearance

This Panel will focus on current and existing mine-clearance methods as well as on special clearance situations caused by factors such as the types of mines used and soil conditions. Among the issues to be addressed will be traditional mine-clearing methods and procedures in areas with special problems, such as sensitive (abnormal) mines or dense vegetation; traditional mine clearing in areas with exceptionally tough and stony soil and/or high metal content; and the use of dogs. (The question of future technological developments in mine clearance will be discussed in Panel E.)

Documentation

Background Paper No. 2

(c) Training indigenous de-miners

It is the policy of the United Nations to train local personnel in all aspects related to mine clearance and to establish a sustainable indigenous de-mining capacity in countries in which the United Nations provides assistance in mine clearance. This Panel will, therefore, address questions relating to the educational and cultural challenges associated with the training of indigenous de-miners, including programme management personnel and possible suggestions for their improvement. Among the issues to be addressed will be recruitment, training of supervisors and support for refresher training.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 3

(d) Management of de-mining operations

This Panel will address problems associated with the management and administration of mine-clearance programmes and will focus on the legal, financial, managerial and logistical aspects. Among the issues for discussion will be problems encountered in the establishment phase of a programme, i.e., the design, programme structure and organization, Government approval, legal arrangements, cooperation, customs, logistics, etc.; financial structure and establishment of sound financial and procurement procedures; management training and transfer of managerial skills to local personnel.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 4

(e) New technologies in mine and minefield detection and mine clearance

While mine technology has progressed rapidly in the years since the end of the Second World War, mine-detection and clearance technology has not. The majority of mine-detection and clearance equipment in use today is derived from the technology of the 1940s and does not allow the rapidity of clearance needed to restore normal life quickly in mine-affected countries. In 1993, the international community allocated approximately US$ 70 million to clear roughly 100,000 land-mines while during the same period approximately 2 million more land-mines were laid, leaving the international community with an annual "de-mining deficit" of some 1.9 million mines. These figures indicate the urgent need to develop new technologies in mine clearance.

Accordingly, this Panel will address issues pertaining to new technologies in detecting individual mines and minefields and in mechanical/technological mine clearance.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 5

(f) Treatment and rehabilitation of land-mine victims

The medical treatment and rehabilitation of land-mine victims is a task challenging the medical establishment in every mine-affected country. Angola, alone, has approximately 70,000 amputees and new accidents occurring every day highlight the problem.

This Panel will, therefore, address questions pertaining to the medical treatment of land-mine victims, both on the spot and in hospital; standardization of equipment and training of paramedics competent to deal with mine injuries; and problems and issues associated with physical and psychological rehabilitation.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 6

(g) Emergency mine clearance - problems and solutions

This Panel will focus on situations where unexpected land-mine problems are encountered that prevent the distribution of vital humanitarian assistance. As a trained indigenous mine-clearance capacity is not readily available in these types of emergency situations, other more rapid solutions have to be found. Among the questions the Panel may wish to address are the use of dogs for rapid survey and clearance, unforeseen situations and possible solutions.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 7

(h) Education and training in mine awareness

This Panel will address the measures to be taken to educate local populations about mine avoidance in mine-affected countries. The Panel will focus on various aspects of mine-awareness training programmes, i.e., mine-awareness training for avoiding accidents targeting at-risk populations, problems in cross-cultural communications, the development of a country-specific curriculum; interactive training and the mobilization of local populations. The Panel may also wish to consider the desirability of establishing a central repository of mine-awareness materials at the United Nations to facilitate the exchange of information on this aspect.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 8

(i) The integrated mine-clearance programme - concept and practice

This Panel will discuss the structure of an integrated mine-clearance programme, as well as the appropriate relationship between non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, local officials, governmental institutions, etc. The Panel will also focus on the process of transferring the responsibilities for a mine-clearance programme and other mine-related matters to the Government of a mine-affected country.

Documentation

Background Paper No. 9

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Information meeting

A presentation will be made by H.E. Mr. Johann Molander (Sweden), Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts to Prepare the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, followed by a question-and-answer period.

The presentation will focus on the work accomplished by the Group of Governmental Experts to revise Protocol II of the Convention dealing with land-mines.

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6. Strengthening and promotion of the stand-by capacity of the United Nations in mine clearance

In his report to the General Assembly on assistance in mine clearance (A/49/357 and Add.1 and 2), the Secretary-General indicated the need for creating a stand-by capacity to strengthen flexibility and responsiveness with regard to United Nations assistance to land-mine affected countries. In many mine-clearance operations, the United Nations has sought to obtain direct support for mine-action assistance programmes through contributions in kind. Such direct support has often proved to be critical in quickly addressing urgent problems. In order to facilitate further a quick and effective response to mine problems, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs is working, in accordance with the direction given by the Secretary-General in his report, to establish a stand-by capacity for personnel, facilities and equipment, to be utilized for United Nations mine-action assistance programmes.

A note by the Secretariat setting out a proposed framework for a stand-by capacity of the United Nations in mine clearance will be before the Meeting. Participants are invited to consider making pledges and contributions to the stand-by capacity as well.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat - Proposed framework for a stand-by capacity of the United Nations in mine clearance (SG/CONF.7/3).

7. Conclusion of the work of the Meeting

It is expected that the Chairmen of the proposed panels will present to the plenary a brief report on the deliberations of their respective panels.

The President of the International Meeting will make a closing statement.

Annex

PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK

Plenary

Wednesday, 5 July		
10 a.m.	Item 1	Opening of the Meeting
	Item 2	Election of officers
	Item 3	Adoption of the rules of procedure, agenda and organization of work
Thursday, 6 July		
10 a.m.	Item 4	Opening of the high-level segment - Statement by the Secretary-General - General statements by participants and announcements of contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance*
3 p.m.	Item 4	Continuation of the general discussion
Friday, 7 July		
10 a.m.	Item 4	Conclusion of the general discussion
3 p.m.	Item 6	Strengthening and promotion of the stand-by capacity of the United Nations in mine clearance
	Item 7	Conclusion of the work of the Meeting

* In view of the limited time available for the general discussion, speakers addressing the plenary are kindly requested not to exceed 7 minutes in the delivery of their statements.

Panels of experts

(Item 5: Discussion on the technical aspects of mine clearance and mine-related issues)

Wednesday, 5 July

11 a.m.-1 p.m	Panel A	Mine surveys
3 p.m.-6 p.m.	Panel B	Current methods in mine clearance
3 p.m.-6 p.m.	Panel F	Treatment and rehabilitation of land-mine victims

Thursday, 6 July

11 a.m.-1 p.m	Panel G	Emergency mine clearance - problems and solutions
11 a.m.-1 p.m.	Panel C	Training indigenous de-miners
3 p.m.-6 p.m.	Panel D	Management of de-mining operations
3 p.m.-6 p.m.	Panel H	Education and training in mine awareness

Friday, 7 July

10 a.m.-1 p.m.	Panel E	New technologies in mine and minefield detection and mine clearance
10 a.m.-	Panel I	The integrated mine-clearance programme - concept and practice

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Information meeting

A presentation will be made by H.E. Mr. Johann Molander (Sweden), Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts to Prepare the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, followed by a question-and-answer period.

The presentation, which will take place on Wednesday, 5 July, at 11 a.m., will focus on the work accomplished by the Group of Governmental Experts to revise Protocol II of the Convention dealing with land-mines.

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Exhibition on Mine Clearance

Participants in the International Meeting on Mine Clearance are invited to view an exhibition on mine clearance which will be held on the mezzanine of the Palais des Nations (building E) in conjunction with the Meeting. The exhibition will endeavour to demonstrate, in an integrated manner, the activities undertaken in mine-affected countries by organizations of the United Nations system.

As a contribution to this exhibition, a number of internationally acclaimed photographers will display pictures featuring material related to this event.